

TWENTY-FIFTH
ANNIVERSARY OF THE
FIRST AIRPLANE
FLIGHT

TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE
FIRST AIRPLANE FLIGHT



PROCEEDINGS

AT THE

EXERCISES HELD AT KITTY HAWK, N. C., ON
DECEMBER 17, 1928, IN COMMEMORATION
OF THE TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE FIRST FLIGHT OF AN
AIRPLANE MADE BY

WILBUR AND ORVILLE WRIGHT



UNITED STATES
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE
WASHINGTON : 1929

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 291

SUBMITTED BY MR. WARREN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

January 22, 1929.

Resolved, That the proceedings at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, on December 17, 1928, commemorating the twenty-fifth anniversary of the first airplane flight by Wilbur and Orville Wright shall be printed as a House document.

Attest:

WILLIAM TYLER PAGE,
Clerk.

PREFACE

The twenty-fifth anniversary of the first successful flight of an airplane was celebrated by a pilgrimage of approximately 200 persons to Kill Devil Hills, near Kitty Hawk, N. C., on December 17, 1928. The pilgrimage was conducted under the auspices of the International Civil Aeronautics Conference and of the National Aeronautic Association. The delegates and guests of the conference were taken from Washington to Kill Devil Hills and return as guests of the Government of the United States following the closing of the sessions of the conference, which had met in Washington on December 12, 13, and 14, on the call of the President of the United States in commemoration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the first flight of a power-propelled heavier-than-air machine carrying a man.

The Congress of the United States had authorized the erection of a national monument on Kill Devil Hill, where the Wright brothers had for several years conducted their experiments with gliders. A bill to commemorate this great epoch in history was introduced on December 17, 1926, in the Senate by Senator Hiram Bingham, of Connecticut, and in the House of Representatives by Representative Lindsay C. Warren, of North Carolina. It subsequently passed both Houses of Congress and was signed by President Coolidge on March 2, 1927. The National Aeronautic Association had authorized the erection of a memorial on the spot from which, on December 17, 1903, Orville Wright started on the first successful flight of an airplane in a machine designed and built by himself and his brother, Wilbur.

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Wilbur Wright died in 1911, but the surviving brother, Orville, was present as the guest of honor. The Secretary of War, Dwight F. Davis, laid the corner stone of the national monument, while United States Senator Hiram Bingham of Connecticut, president of the National Aeronautic Association, unveiled the association's memorial. The Congress of the United States was represented by a delegation composed of Senators Hiram Bingham of Connecticut, Hugo Black of Alabama, and William H. McMaster of South Dakota, and Representatives James S. Parker of New York, James A. Frear of Wisconsin, Melvin J. Maas of Minnesota, Lindsay C. Warren of North Carolina, John J. Kindred of New York, Virgil Chapman of Kentucky, John J. McDuffie of Alabama, Edward E. Cox of Georgia, and Roy G. Fitzgerald of Ohio.

The Government, in acting as host to the guest of honor and to the distinguished guests from many nations, was represented by the following official American delegates to the International Civil Aeronautics Conference:

Dr. Orville Wright; Senator Hiram Bingham, president of the National Aeronautic Association; F. Trubee Davison, Assistant Secretary of War; Edward P. Warner, Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Aeronautics; William P. MacCracken, jr., Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Aeronautics; Dr. Joseph S. Ames, chairman of the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics; and Lester D. Gardner, president of the Aeronautical Chamber of Commerce.

The plans for the pilgrimage and the joint program at Kill Devil Hills had been prepared by John F. Victory, secretary of the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics, who acted as chairman of the committee

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on the Kitty Hawk trip. The arrangements for the laying of the corner stone had been made by the office of the Quartermaster General of the War Department.

The joint party left Washington Saturday evening, December 15, on the steamer *District of Columbia*, which had been chartered for the purpose by joint action of the Government and of the National Aeronautic Association. Arriving at Old Point Comfort Sunday afternoon, they were the guests of the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics for a tour of the committee's aeronautical research laboratories at Langley Field, Va. Automobiles were provided by the Chambers of Commerce of Phoebus and of Hampton, Va., and by the employees of the committee. At Langley Field the party split into three groups for inspection of the committee's laboratories, where scientific research on the more fundamental problems of flight is conducted for the advancement alike of civil and military aeronautics. The entire party was welcomed by Dr. Joseph S. Ames, chairman of the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics, who explained briefly the organization and activities of the committee.

After spending Sunday evening on the steamer the party left Norfolk Monday morning by busses for Kitty Hawk. At the North Carolina State line they were met by the Governor of North Carolina, Hon. Angus W. McLean, and his party, including Mr. W. O. Saunders, president of the Kill Devil Hills Memorial Association. The main road being under repair and the detour impassable for heavy busses, the party was met at Currituck courthouse by a group of citizens, with their private automobiles, from Elizabeth City, N. C., and vicinity. These volunteers had been organized by Mr. Saunders and his aides, and their services on the

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occasion were absolutely essential to the successful movement of the party. They transported the party 30 miles to the ferry at Point Harbor, and after the ceremonies transported the party back from Point Harbor to the busses at Currituck courthouse.

On arriving at Point Harbor, transportation over the shallow waters of Currituck Sound was provided by an improvised ferry and by small boats to Kitty Hawk, which is on a sand bar that runs for miles along the North Carolina coast. On the Kitty Hawk side the Coast Guard Service had organized all available automobiles and furnished temporary road patrol and police service. Automobiles volunteered by coast guardsmen and residents of the vicinity were augmented by others from Manteo and from Elizabeth City (50 miles away) to provide transportation for the official party.

Upon leaving the ferry the party was first driven to Virginia Dare Shores, where they were guests of the Kill Devil Hills Memorial Association for a North Carolina barbecue and turkey dinner. Promptly at 2 o'clock the exercises in connection with the laying of the corner stone of the Federal monument began on top of Kill Devil Hill, with Hon. F. Trubee Davison, Assistant Secretary of War, presiding. Governor McLean made the address of welcome. Hon. Lindsay C. Warren, Representative in Congress from that district, made the principal speech. Congressman Warren spoke also as chairman of the National Advisory Council of the Kill Devil Hills Memorial Association. The corner stone of the national monument was then laid by Hon. Dwight F. Davis, Secretary of War, and an American flag was presented by Congressman Roy G. Fitzgerald, of Ohio, on behalf of the citizens of Dayton,

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Ohio, the birthplace of the Wright brothers. A Navy band from Norfolk played The Star Spangled Banner.

The party then proceeded down Kill Devil Hill and across the plain about one-quarter of a mile to the point where the first successful flight of an airplane had started, on which spot the National Aeronautic Association, by permission of the Kill Devil Hills Memorial Association, granted before the site had been transferred to the Government, had erected a memorial tablet on a boulder of Mount Airy granite weighing 10 tons. John F. Victory, who had also acted on behalf of the Wright memorial committee of the National Aeronautic Association in selecting the boulder and arranging for its unveiling, presided. The address of welcome was made by Mr. W. O. Saunders as president of the Kill Devil Hills Memorial Association. Capt. William J. Tate, original host to the Wright brothers on the occasion of their first arrival at Kitty Hawk, certified that the spot on which the boulder was erected was the actual spot from which the first flight was made. Senator Bingham, as president of the National Aeronautic Association, made the principal address at these exercises and unveiled the memorial. As the cords of a silken parachute which veiled the stone were pulled by Misses Mary Byrd Saunders and Florence Ballard, of Elizabeth City, N. C., a flock of homing pigeons was released, and the band played The Star Spangled Banner.

The party then returned the 78 miles by automobile, boat, and bus to Norfolk, where they boarded the special steamer and arrived at Washington Tuesday morning, December 18, 1928.

The pilgrimage to Kitty Hawk was the climax of the Government's program for the entertainment of the

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delegates and guests of the International Civil Aeronautics Conference, and the party was disbanded upon arrival at Washington. The proceedings at Kitty Hawk were recorded by employees of the National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics in order to preserve a permanent record of that historic occasion.

All members of the party were generous in praise of their North Carolina hosts, the Kill Devil Hills Memorial Association, and in their admiration for the wonderful spirit and hospitality of the people of North Carolina, without whose personal efforts and self-sacrifice in providing emergency transportation the pilgrimage could not have been a success.

A most essential factor in contributing to the success of the pilgrimage was the generous and patriotic action of the National Aeronautic Association, through its president, Senator Hiram Bingham, of Connecticut, in guaranteeing to the steamboat company the expenses involved in chartering a special steamer, over and above the public funds that were available for the purpose.

JOHN F. VICTORY,
Chairman Committee on Kitty Hawk Trip.

MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL, KILL
DEVIL HILLS MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION

Representative LINDSAY C. WARREN, of North Carolina
Chairman

Senator HIRAM BINGHAM, of Connecticut
Vice Chairman

Senator Lawrence D. Tyson, of Tennessee.

William Randolph Hearst, of New York.

Senator Morris Sheppard, of Texas.

A. V. Donahey, of Ohio.

Cecil B. de Mille, of California.

John H. Small, of North Carolina.

Senator Thomas J. Walsh, of Montana.

Harry Guggenheim, of New York.

Col. Reginald De Lacour.

George B. Smith, of Ohio.

Josephus Daniels, of North Carolina.

Gov. John H. Trumbull, of Connecticut.

Frank A. Tichenor, of New York.

Representative Robert Luce, of Massachusetts.

Earl Findley, of New York.

Frank Page, of North Carolina.

Representative Fiorello H. LaGuardia, of New York.

Representative A. L. Bulwinkle, of North Carolina.

Gilbert Grosvenor, of the District of Columbia.

Lieut. Commander S. S. Yeandle, United States
Coast Guard.

Admiral R. E. Coontz, U. S. N.

Ogden L. Mills, of New York.

John F. Victory, of the District of Columbia.

F. Valentine Chappell, of Connecticut.

Angus W. McLean, of North Carolina.

William G. McAdoo, of California.

Representative Roy G. Fitzgerald, of Ohio.

Col. Charles A. Lindbergh, of Minnesota.

Charles G. Dawes, of Illinois, Vice President of the
United States.

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Nicholas Longworth, of Ohio, Speaker of the House
of Representatives.
Hon. Herbert Hoover, of California.
Commander Richard Evelyn Byrd, of Virginia.
Gen. John J. Pershing, U. S. A., retired.
Howard E. Coffin, of Michigan.
Gov. O. Max Gardner, of North Carolina.
Edsel B. Ford, of Michigan.
Senator F. M. Simmons, of North Carolina.
Representative John Q. Tilson, of Connecticut.
Harry Woodburn Chase, of North Carolina.
Mark Sullivan, of the District of Columbia.
Gen. A. J. Bowley, of Texas.
John Barton Payne, of Illinois.
Edwin A. Alderman, of Virginia.
Alfred E. Smith, of New York.
Louis Ludlow, of Indiana.
Joseph Pulitzer, of Missouri.
Gen. Mason M. Patrick, U. S. A., retired.
Right Rev. Thos C. Darst, of North Carolina.
Representative John N. Garner, of Texas.
William J. Malone, of Connecticut.
Representative Finis J. Garrett, of Tennessee.
Gov. Franklin D. Roosevelt, of New York.
Rear Admiral W. A. Moffett, U. S. N.
Senator Lee S. Overman, of North Carolina.
Talbot O. Freeman, of New York.

COMMITTEE ON KITTY HAWK TRIP, INTERNATIONAL CIVIL AERONAUTICS CONFERENCE

JOHN F. VICTORY, *Chairman*

Capt. E. E. Adler, United States Army.
Luther K. Bell.
H. H. Blee.
Lieut. Commander D. C. Watson, United States
Navy.

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President National Aeronautic Association

PROCEEDINGS
AT LAYING OF CORNER STONE OF THE
NATIONAL MONUMENT TO BE ERECTED BY
THE GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED
STATES ON KILL DEVIL HILL
NORTH CAROLINA

PROCEEDINGS AT THE LAYING OF THE CORNER STONE

DECEMBER 17, 1928—2 P. M.

F. TRUBEE DAVISON, *Assistant Secretary of War*
Presiding Officer

ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDING OFFICER
HON. F. TRUBEE DAVISON

Mr. DAVISON. I feel more honored than I have words to express over the distinction conferred upon me to preside over these ceremonies in commemoration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the first flight by Wilbur and Orville Wright, and for the purpose as well of dedicating a memorial to their great and everlasting contribution to the progress of civilization.

Others will express, more graphically than I am able to, the deep and dramatic significance of this event which I look upon as the building of one of the most important, if not the most important, milestones in man's advancement over the invisible highways of the air. But before I introduce the distinguished gentlemen who are to speak I wish to take this opportunity to say that to me and to millions of other young men and women in this country and in other lands the gift of flight given to the world by the Wrights is held as an inspiration and a challenge to carry on.

To honor the Wright brothers to-day people have come from many States of the Union, and we also have with us to-day many distinguished guests from all parts of the world, and it gives me great pleasure now to present to you an old friend of most of us, His Excellency the Honorable Angus W. McLean, Governor of North Carolina.

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ADDRESS OF HON. ANGUS W. McLEAN

Governor of North Carolina

Governor McLEAN. Mr. Chairman, few events in history have been fraught with greater possibilities than the incident which transpired here a quarter of a century ago. Because of the significance of that incident and its national and international recognition in the exercises of this hour, I have the high honor of welcoming to the shores of North Carolina the distinguished group of men and women assembled here today. It is a distinct pleasure to welcome to the scene of his early endeavors one of the famous brothers whose exploits made this occasion possible.

As I stand here I can not but recall another important event in the history of America, which happened only a few miles across yonder bay, upon sacred Roanoke Island.

The first attempt by men of the English-speaking race to colonize the New World was made on the coast of North Carolina under the direction of Sir Walter Raleigh, who in three separate expeditions, sent out from 1584 to 1587, laid the foundation for England's vast colonial empire in America. The first expedition set out in 1584 for the purpose of exploring the country and selecting a site for a permanent settlement and reached the North Carolina coast on July 4, 1584. The second expedition occurred in 1585-86, when an attempt was made to establish the first colony. It landed on Roanoke Island on August 17, 1585, but was not successful because of trouble with the Indians and losses by famine and storm.

The third expedition, under Gov. John White, landed a few miles from here on Roanoke Island in 1587 and

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was responsible for two romantic incidents in our history.

One, the baptism of Manteo, on August 15, 1587, represented the first recorded instance of a Christian sacrament practiced by English Protestants within the present area of the United States; the other was the birth of Virginia Dare, daughter of Ananias and Eleanor Dare and granddaughter of Governor White, on August 18, 1587, the first child born of English parents in America.

This child, immortalized by the circumstances of her birth, left Roanoke Island with Governor White when she was only 9 days old, and with her departure disappeared forever all later record of her life. Governor White returned to England for supplies, leaving a portion of his settlers on Roanoke Island. Upon his return, which was delayed because of war between England and Spain until 1590, he found no trace of his colonists other than the silent and enigmatical word "Croatan" carved upon a tree; and the fate of "The lost colony" has remained a mystery to this day.

A little more than 300 years later Orville and Wilbur Wright made their initial flight, and thus another historic event, the birth of transportation by airplane, occurred on the shores of North Carolina. It is of remarkable significance, therefore, that one of the latest and most far-reaching achievements of Anglo-Saxon civilization occurred within a few miles of the earliest establishment of that civilization in the New World.

The people of North Carolina, for whom I speak today, are by no means unmindful or unappreciative of the honor which has come to them by reason of the events occurring here 25 years ago, when Orville and Wilbur Wright sought seclusion on this remote island

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and began the experiments which resulted in giving to mankind a new agency of transportation.

We are happy in the thought that one of these distinguished brothers, Mr. Orville Wright, is present today to witness these exercises, commemorating the courage, the skill, and the ingenuity of his brother and himself. Their achievement has added two names to the long list of great American pioneers. They ignored the doubtings and discouragements of an unbelieving world and demonstrated for the first time that man, like the birds of the air, could construct wings and soar for miles over and above the earth.

I appreciate, as I am sure the people of North Carolina generally appreciate, Mr. Wright, that you and your brother blazed the way for the great accomplishments of Colonel Lindbergh, Mr. Chamberlin, Miss Earhart, and others whose exploits have added immortal luster and renown to the fame of America. They appreciate the decision you made to carry on your experiments here, a decision that has placed upon the tongue of every airplane enthusiast of every civilized nation of the earth the names of Kill Devil Hills and Kitty Hawk.

We thank you and welcome you, and at the same time we indulge the hope that you will be spared to return 25 years from this date to see us celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of your marvelous work. I verily believe that by that time transportation by air will have advanced to such a degree that it will have become the safest and most comfortable method of rapid transit.

In extending greetings to the Senators and Representatives in Congress present, I desire to give expression to the appreciation of the people of North Carolina for the reflected honor that has come to them from the

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action of Congress in establishing here a permanent memorial. We shall guard it with diligent care. While it represents the outward manifestation of what has been done, we must not forget that the spirit which motivated it will endure long after the monument, the corner stone of which you are laying to-day, will have crumbled into dust. Senator Bingham and members of the National Aeronautic Association, we extend our hearty welcome to you and our thanks for the marker you are about to unveil on our soil.

I want to mention here to the people of the State that I have a very distinct pleasure from a personal standpoint of welcoming Senator Bingham to North Carolina. I can not forget that a few months ago he was very kind in helping to straighten out a transaction between the State of North Carolina and the State of Connecticut, and I shall never forget the fine spirit of comity and good will which he manifested toward the people of my State on that occasion.

I venture to express the hope that all of you will find it possible and desirable, on succeeding anniversaries, to make pilgrimages to this historic place and take stock of new achievements in air transportation.

We are highly honored that Lord Thompson, former head of the British Air Forces, and the visitors from many foreign nations, who are in America to attend the International Civil Aeronautics Conference, have joined us here.

I feel an unaffected sense of personal pleasure in greeting my warm and highly esteemed friend and associate of former days, the distinguished Secretary of War, who, with his able assistant and other members of his department, has honored us by coming here.

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In conclusion I extend to all our visitors a cordial invitation and at the same time express the ardent wish that you will find it convenient, before returning to your homes, to visit the far-flung mainland of our State and observe the efforts our people are making to build a great commonwealth.

Mr. DAVISON. When men do great things requiring vision, ability, and courage; when, in short, they have genius and accomplish something for the benefit of mankind, we like to erect a memorial to them and to those things which they did, in order that future generations may receive inspiration from those acts and that we may be reminded constantly of them. It remained for the Congressman from this district to take the initiative in that regard in the House of Representatives. He introduced, as you all know, a measure calling for the erection of a monument on the top of Kill Devil Hill. Work to bring that about is now under way, and it gives me great pleasure indeed to present to you again your Congressman, Hon. Lindsay C. Warren.

ADDRESS OF HON. LINDSAY C. WARREN

A Representative from North Carolina

Mr. WARREN. Mr. Chairman, Mr. Orville Wright, delegates attending the International Civil Aeronautics Conference, and ladies and gentlemen: Standing on soil already sacred in the life of the Nation we come here to-day to see the world pay universal acclaim to the inventive genius of man. Over 300 years ago, just 3 miles distant, the first of the English set their feet, built their dwellings, sowed their crops, and performed their religious devotions in the Western World. Upon this soil landed the first English women who crossed the

ocean to find homes upon the newly discovered continent, and here was born and christened the first English child who saw the light of day in the New World. Here the customs, laws, and language of England were first transplanted and struck their roots in the soil.

It was this dauntless spirit of adventure and achievement that prompted Sir Walter Raleigh to extend the domain of civilization—this indefinable spirit which has inspired man to greater achievement through the ages. The story of the pioneer has largely constituted the history of the world.

Over 300 years later the same pioneering spirit again selected North Carolina for its greatest triumph, and the world's most important conquest began on this spot. For centuries the mind of man had been fascinated and diverted to overcome what was supposed to be contrary to every law of nature, and for ages men experimented and planned, to be accompanied only by failure.

And then came the Wrights. It was by no mere accident that Kitty Hawk was selected as the scene for an experiment that later astounded the world. Nor was it their desire for privacy that made Wilbur and Orville Wright come to this spot on the narrow banks of North Carolina, which hold back the Atlantic from its inland sounds. They did not think that the public would manifest enough interest to disturb them. Kitty Hawk was chosen because the United States Weather Bureau had advised them that it was in this locality that the winds were the strongest and steadiest, and therefore more propitious for their plans. They came to what was then a little isolated village of fishermen, whose life had been a continuous combat with an unrelenting sea. They found here what has been said to be the purest Anglo-Saxon blood on the American Continent—

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God-fearing, noble men and women, who, together with the crew of the United States Coast Guard Station at Kill Devil Hills, composed the population of this outskirt on the eastern frontier of America.

The scant publicity appearing in the press of the Nation termed it a fool's errand. They suffered the same aspersions and derisions as have all others who blazed trails. They became forgotten men—cranks seeking to obtain the impossible. For three years they conducted their glider experiments and after a thousand such flights they had actually succeeded in staying in the air for a minute in a glider. Their courage and faith were superb. They knew that the history of their race had been full of failure, but that each failure had marked a surer and firmer advance of civilization. The world might scoff, but the Wrights knew, as well as men can know anything in the future, that the machine they had so patiently constructed would fly, for the formula had been verified. They achieved their results neither by luck nor the process of elimination, but by scientific inquiry and study. And so, by a toss of a coin, it fell to the lot of our distinguished guest to usher in a new era that has revolutionized transportation and has redounded to the happiness and progress of the human race.

Twenty-five years ago from this morning, with a 27-mile-an-hour wind against it, his machine rose from the ground and went a distance of 120 feet in a flight lasting 12 seconds. And here it was that for the first time in history a machine carrying a man raised itself by its own power into the air in full flight, went ahead without reduction of speed, and landed at a point as high as that from which it started. Here this epoch in

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the history of the world had its genesis. Here stands the cradle of aviation.

As those who first came to these shores lived in the great age of discovery, so to-day we live in the age of invention. Distance has been annihilated by the marvelous radio. The world has been united by the locomotive and automobile. The perfection of the printing press has spread knowledge to every class. The humblest man to-day has available for his comfort and his education facilities that the mightiest king of a former century never dreamed possible. When the gas engine was hurled into the air by Wilbur and Orville Wright, the last citadel of man's earthly kingdom was brought into subjection, and it is the sober judgment of students of human history that nothing can compare in creative worth to this accomplishment.

When we stop and visualize that just a quarter of a century ago one of the greatest newspapers in America wired its correspondent to "stop sending fake stuff, for nobody believes these wildcat yarns about men flying in an airplane," the supremacy of man in the air is almost unbelievable. With this humble origin as a setting we have seen the Atlantic spanned, the globe circled, and the North Pole flown over. We have seen the airplane become an indispensable necessity in the commercial and business life of the world and a vital factor in national defense. What would appear to be a stretch of the wildest imagination could only conjure up the immediate future.

To the honored guest of this splendid gathering I would say that it has not been the privilege of many who have made history to be the recipient of such an ovation as this. There has rarely been accorded to a man in the flesh the plaudits of his fellow citizens such

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as within a week have been given to you and your lamented brother. A grateful and appreciative Nation, fortified by her friends and neighbors of the universe, come to pay you a tribute of admiration and regard that has only few parallels in history. With the modesty that has ever characterized you, you have seen those who would detract from your achievement succumb in the light of analysis. You stand not only before the world as a discoverer but as one whose brain perfected to its present state what was first conceived in it.

This memorial authorized by the Congress of the United States, started here to-day, is merely to place in imperishable granite the recording of another milestone of man's work. Its plans have been sought from the most distinguished architects of the Nation. It is contemplated that there shall be a lofty tower containing a light to guide those who travel by air and sea. The second unit calls for a new coast guard station on yonder beach, to which will be attached a tablet in bronze to depict what transpired here. How fitting it is that the Coast Guard, that noble service for humanity, which contributed its assistance in this feat, should be recognized in its perpetuation. Next year a bridge will span this sound to make it in easy access to the Nation, and I believe that I can safely state that North Carolina, recognizing its obligation, will construct a paved road to this historic spot.

We are dedicating here to-day a national shrine. There will be gathered here the intimate associations that made it possible. Here the air was conquered and here belong the implements of conquest. To this spot in centuries to come will journey those who would pay reverent tribute. To-day the homage of the world is

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given here. To-morrow it will become the pilgrimage and the Mecca of those whose happiness have been enhanced.

This memorial standing here facing a mighty ocean will proclaim the sentiments of a grateful Republic.

Mr. DAVISON. On this occasion, that we come here to celebrate this afternoon, there were four witnesses who are still alive, and it gives me great pleasure to present to you three of them, Mr. Daniels, Mr. Ethridge, and Mr. Dough, retired members of the Coast Guard.

Twenty years ago this year the War Department of the United States Government ordered an airplane from the Wright brothers, the first airplane to be purchased by any government in the world. Some of the requirements which had to be met by that airplane before it could be accepted by the Army were that it must fly at least 35 miles an hour, it must be capable of being disassembled in one hour's time and able to be carried on an Army truck. To-day any airplane which flies as slowly as 35 miles an hour will find itself in considerable distress, and I know of none that can be disassembled in one hour nor transported on an Army truck.

Beginning with that date, the airplane has become an increasingly vital part of the national defense. To-day it holds a very important position from a military standpoint. Further than that, it is a great instrument of peace, and we have seen the best example of that during the past two years, when it has brought the peoples of the nations of the world closer together. It is very fitting, in view of the action of our Government and in view of the fact that by reason of Congressman Warren and Senator Bingham's bill a Cabinet commission was created by Congress to procure this monument, that I should now have the honor of presenting

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to you the man who will lay the corner stone, in which will be placed many appropriate documents. I present the Honorable Dwight F. Davis, Secretary of War and chairman of the Cabinet Commission of the Kitty Hawk Memorial.

ADDRESS OF HON. DWIGHT F. DAVIS

Secretary of War

Mr. DAVIS. Since time immemorial nations have consecrated battle fields and erected monuments to their distinguished sons. This Nation, dedicated to peace, may well consecrate these sea-swept sandy shores as a peace-time battle field, for here mankind won a great battle; here man conquered air. Here, where they won their first great victory, will be erected a monument to our peace-time pioneers of progress, Wilbur and Orville Wright.

Since their first flight in 1903 aviation has made tremendous progress. The great continent that lies to the west of us is being covered with an invisible network of airways. This mighty ocean has been dwarfed by brave men and women who, in their tiny airplanes, defied space and sea.

The memorial soon to arise here will forever keep alive the names of these two Americans who gave wings to the world, but an even greater memorial to Wilbur and Orville Wright will be the part to be played by the future expansion of aviation in fostering peace, prosperity, and progress throughout the world.

Even as we to-day lay the corner stone of this memorial, so aviation of to-day is building the foundation for a great structure—the aviation of to-morrow. From that foundation time can never erase the names of those

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two brothers who had the courage, the ability, and the patience to transform man's dream of flight into the realm of reality—Wilbur and Orville Wright.

(At this point the corner stone was laid by Secretary Davis. A sealed copper box was placed in the corner stone containing the following articles:)

Flag of the United States of America.

Photograph of Wilbur Wright.

Autographed photograph of Orville Wright.

Program of pilgrimage of delegates and guests, International Civil Aeronautics Conference and of the National Aeronautic Association to Kill Devil Hills, N. C., December 17, 1928.

Brochure of the Twenty-fifth Anniversary Celebration of the First Successful Airplane Flight, Kitty Hawk, N. C. (by Capt. William J. Tate, of Coinjock, N. C.).

Copy of the Independent, Elizabeth City, N. C., December 14, 1928—Kill Devil Hills memorial edition.

Special United States 2-cent postage stamp of the International Civil Aeronautics Conference, issued to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the first flight of an airplane.

Badge of Orville Wright as official delegate of the United States at the International Civil Aeronautics Conference.

Special aviation anniversary section of the Dayton Daily News, Sunday, December 16, 1928.

Special aviation anniversary section of the New York Times, Sunday, December 16, 1928.

Souvenir pamphlet of the International Civil Aeronautics Conference, Twenty-five Years Ago.

Original manuscript of first news dispatch reporting first successful flight.

Mr. DAVISON. There is another community in these United States which quite properly claims to have a

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fundamental interest in the Wright brothers and all that they did, because after all they were born and brought up in Dayton, Ohio, and a great deal of their early work and many of their early experiments were carried on there. That city is represented here to-day by their Congressman and a number of public-spirited citizens to pay tribute to the part that Kitty Hawk and Kill Devil Hills have played in this great development. I therefore take pleasure in presenting to you Congressman Roy Fitzgerald, of Ohio.

ADDRESS OF HON. ROY G. FITZGERALD

A Representative from Ohio

Mr. FITZGERALD. Fellow citizens and guests from many friendly lands: From the people of my home city, Dayton, Ohio, where Wilbur and Orville Wright fought battles with a problem which had fascinated and baffled mankind through the ages, I present a tribute at the site of their victory—the conquest of the air. Here to Kill Devil Hills they came to destroy a demon of ignorance.

The Wrights were endowed with a miraculous gift of imaginative synthesis. They assembled seemingly unrelated discoveries and produced a new mechanism to astound the world.

They challenged a world of skepticism and indifference. Trusting to the science of predecessors, the false structure crashed beneath them. They passed through the shadows of disappointment, disillusionment, and ridicule. They persevered to rebuild the laws of aerodynamics.

Here upon this coast of North Carolina, 25 years ago to-day, they cast the net of their genius into the sea of aeronautic ignorance and drew forth the treasure of human flight.

THE LAYING OF THE CORNER STONE

The accomplishment here at Kitty Hawk on December 17, 1903, beat down a world of incredulity and made illustrious in the history of the human race this epoch of ours and the names of Wilbur and Orville Wright.

This flag of the great Republic which has taught popular government to the peoples of the earth has come across the mountains by airplane to the people of North Carolina from the neighbors of Orville Wright in testimony of our affection at this shrine which marks the greatest single achievement in the development of transportation of all time.

(The American flag, presented by the citizens of Dayton, Ohio, was then raised and The Star Spangled Banner was played by a Navy band from Norfolk, Va.)

CONCLUSION

Mr. DAVISON. This concludes the ceremonies on top of Kill Devil Hill, and we will now proceed down the hill to the point where a memorial erected by the National Aeronautic Association marking the spot from which the first flight of an airplane was made will be unveiled.

PROCEEDINGS
AT THE UNVEILING OF THE MEMORIAL
ERECTED BY THE NATIONAL AERONAUTIC
ASSOCIATION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
(INC.), ON THE SPOT FROM WHICH THE FIRST
FLIGHT OF AN AIRPLANE WAS MADE
DECEMBER 17, 1903

PROCEEDINGS AT THE UNVEILING OF THE NATIONAL AERONAUTIC ASSOCIATION MEMORIAL

DECEMBER 17, 1928—3 P. M.

JOHN F. VICTORY, *Secretary of National Advisory Committee
for Aeronautics, Presiding Officer*

ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDING OFFICER

MR. JOHN F. VICTORY

MR. VICTORY. Mr. Orville Wright, distinguished guests of many nations, fellow Americans: In the name of the National Aeronautic Association of the United States of America, I welcome you on this occasion to this historic spot, from which the first flight of an airplane was made by Orville Wright December 17, 1903, in a machine designed and built by himself and his lamented brother, Wilbur Wright. The National Aeronautic Association, at its last annual convention held in Los Angeles in September of this year, authorized the erection of a memorial on this spot. As chairman of the Committee on the Kitty Hawk Trip and as a member of the Wright Memorial Committee of the National Aeronautic Association, I have the great pleasure to express the thanks and acknowledge the great indebtedness of all of us to the people of this locality for their fine cooperation, without which this ceremony would have been impossible.

The site on which this memorial is placed was granted to the National Aeronautic Association by the

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Kill Devil Hills Memorial Association, and it is a great pleasure on this occasion to introduce to you the president of the Kill Devil Hills Memorial Association, Mr. W. O. Saunders, of Elizabeth City, N. C.

ADDRESS OF MR. W. O. SAUNDERS

President of the Kill Devil Hills Memorial Association

Mr. SAUNDERS. An Irishman wearing a haunted and perturbed look was seen standing on a street corner. A friend approached and asked him what was on his mind.

"I was just wondering," said the Irishman, "what place I'm going to when I die?"

"And what good would it do you to know that?" asked his friend.

"Faith, and I was thinking that if I knew I would keep away from it," said Pat.

Perhaps there are some who have made the rough journey over an unfinished North Carolina road project to-day who, had they known what sort of place they were coming to, would have stayed away from it.

But, friends and patriots, we are here. And let no man regret that some discomfort was endured in making possible this belated but splendid acknowledgment of civilization's lasting debt to Orville and Wilbur Wright and a Nation's pride in their achievement of the greatest triumph of man.

As president of the Kill Devil Hills Memorial Association and speaking for the citizenship of this great State, I welcome the representatives and guests of the National Aeronautic Association to these shores. It is my proud privilege to say to them that the simple, rugged, and beautiful stone that they have placed here to designate the spot where the first heavier-than-air power-

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driven flying machine was flown by Mr. Orville Wright 25 years ago to-day, will be cherished by the Kill Devil Hills Memorial Association, and this association will consider itself an unofficial but loyal guardian of this monument and the sacred ground on which it reposes.

And if this place has been reached by some of you with great difficulty this day, let me say to you that it is for this reason primarily that the association which I have the honor to represent was conceived and instituted—that the Congressional Memorial to the Wright brothers and other monuments to be erected on these famous shores shall be made accessible to all America.

You have seen the machinery of North Carolina's monumental highway system at work on the road from Virginia to Kitty Hawk to-day. I have high hopes that in another year we shall see Currituck Sound bridged between Kitty Hawk and the mainland and a ribbon of concrete laid all the way to Kill Devil Hills.

We shall come again and again to Kill Devil Hills to pay tribute to the illustrious Wrights; your future pilgrimages will be made easily, swiftly, and with comfort, and you will find hotels and pavilions here to accommodate vast throngs, for this is a practical Nation with a highly developed appreciation of commercial possibilities, and the imposing memorial to be erected here by Congress and the landscaping of these beautiful hills and their environs will bring capital to these shores and translate a present waste of sand into a notable coastal development.

You will always find here a grateful and hospitable people to welcome you and to offer you every entertainment at their command. And always you will find here those sturdy and faithful men of the United States Coast Guard who made much of every opportunity to

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lend the Wright brothers a hand in their early experiments and without whose assistance this celebration could not have been staged and managed to-day.

We only regret that Wilbur Wright himself is not here in the flesh to-day to witness a flying world's manifestation of its appreciation of his courage and his genius. For Wilbur Wright we lay a wreath of flowers on this mound.

Mr. VICTORY. When the Wright brothers decided to come to this part of the world to conduct their tests with gliders, they established contact with one of your people, and when Wilbur Wright arrived on these shores he went as a stranger to the home of one of your people, and there he was received, and there his brother, Orville Wright, joined him a few days later, and there they planned their work, which after three years of experimentation on Kill Devil Hill culminated successfully on this spot. It is a great pleasure to present to you the man who was the first host to the Wright brothers in this part of the country, Capt. William J. Tate.

ADDRESS OF CAPT. WILLIAM J. TATE

Original Host to the Wright Brothers at Kitty Hawk

Captain TATE. Mr. Wright, ladies, and gentlemen: I am grateful for the opportunity to take a part in these exercises in honor of the Wrights here to-day and to tell you explicitly how this spot was determined and marked so that there will be no dispute about it in the future. There are four persons living to-day, other than Mr. Wright, who saw and were actual eyewitnesses of that first flight. They are: W. S. Dough, A. D. Ethridge, J. T. Daniels, and John Moore. Daniels, Ethridge, and Dough were members of the Kill Devil Hills Life-

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Saving Station at the time the flight was made. Moore was a boy that just happened to be along. W. C. Brinkley, the fifth eyewitness, passed to the great beyond a few years ago.

Acting for the National Aeronautic Association, I called a meeting of the witnesses of this flight on November 4, 1928. Dough, Ethridge, Moore, and I assembled here and I explained to them the importance of arriving at a definite conclusion with respect to the spot where the Wright brothers' airplane, in making its first successful flight, first began to move along the ground. We located the four corners of the building in which the machine was housed, just over there where the flag [indicating a site about 40 feet distant] is. We took into consideration what Mr. Orville Wright said about it in his article *How We Made Our First Flight*. We had a compass with us and we were sure of our compass course. After considering all these things and talking it over these other three men proceeded by themselves to come out here on this point and select the spot on which this magnificent boulder stands and said that this was the spot where the Wright airplane started its first successful flight. Mr. Daniels was not present at that time, but he is present to-day, and I am sure that he agrees with us that this is the right spot.

After agreeing upon this exact spot we signed a paper to that effect; it was mailed to Mr. John F. Victory, master of these ceremonies and chairman of the committee that arranged this pilgrimage to Kitty Hawk on behalf of the International Civil Aeronautics Conference and the National Aeronautic Association, and by him it was deposited at the headquarters of the National Aeronautic Association at Washington.

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The attitude of us natives when the Wrights first arrived in this country was passive but friendly. We realized that the Wrights, and especially the late lamented Wilbur, were masters of sarcasm if you broached the subject of flying in a ridiculous vein. If they thought, however, that you asked a question for knowledge, no man would go farther to make it plain to you.

I am proud personally of my contact with the Wrights, that I lived to associate with them, and that I spent a good many of my loafing hours around their camp. I can see now the wonderful disposition they had along certain lines. I do not know why they did not lose patience with us. I have paid many a tribute to them—Christian gentlemen, moral to the core; nothing I can say can pay them too great a tribute.

Mr. VICTORY. To paraphrase the words of the immortal Lincoln, "The world will little note, nor long remember, what may be said here, but it can never forget what the Wright brothers did here." For aviation this is the hallowed spot of our universe—the very spot from which an airplane first left the ground in successful flight.

The National Aeronautic Association is honored on this great occasion by the presence of "The World's First Aviator," Orville Wright, and by the presence of many official and unofficial guests of the Government of the United States, who upon invitation from the President of the United States have come from the four corners of the globe to pay tribute here to the memory of Wilbur Wright and to the accomplishments of him and his brother, Orville.

We are honored by the presence of the Secretary of War, Hon. Dwight F. Davis, and of a specially selected

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delegation from the United States Senate and House of Representatives, one of whom, a United States Senator from Connecticut, who is also president of the National Aeronautic Association, will next address you and will have the honor of unveiling this memorial. I have the honor to present Senator Hiram Bingham.

ADDRESS OF HON. HIRAM BINGHAM

A Senator from Connecticut and President of the National Aeronautic Association

Senator BINGHAM. Mr. Chairman, Mr. Wright, and friends: In the first place, on behalf of the National Aeronautic Association, I want to express to the good people of North Carolina our appreciation for all that they have done in the last few days, and I might also say in the last few hours, to enable us to get here more comfortably and to make it possible to move the great granite boulder from the hills of North Carolina to this site.

You have to-day heard the testimony of Captain Tate, who gathered the testimony of all the living eyewitnesses of that event. We are sure by their evidence that this is the spot from which the first airplane flew.

We are gathered here in the vicinity of a great historical event, to which your governor so eloquently gave tribute to-day, and before I read the few words which I have to read on this occasion it seems appropriate that you should look for a moment on the face of one who is a fitting representative to-day of the interesting circumstance that it was on these shores that women of our race first set foot. She is the first woman of any race to cross the Atlantic Ocean by airplane, Miss Amelia Earhart.

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(Miss Earhart stepped forward and bowed to the applause of the multitude.)

Senator BINGHAM (continuing). It is a source of great pride to the members of the National Aeronautic Association to be standing side by side with the distinguished delegates to the International Civil Aeronautics Conference who have come to this sacred spot from many lands to honor the two men who first showed the world how to fly.

We who have cast our lives and our hopes with aeronautics know that it matters not what boundaries may separate us geographically. We strive for a common goal, and we are guided by one principle. That principle is profound faith in the art of flying, which Orville and Wilbur Wright, first of mankind, began to practice on this very spot 25 years ago to-day.

On December 17, 1903, there stood where we are now standing a strange device that looked like a cross between a box kite and the skeleton of a bird. Its creators believed that it would enable them to fly.

A biting cold wind was blowing across Kill Devil Hills at the rate of 27 miles an hour. Orville Wright and his brother realized the difficulties of flying in such a high wind, but estimated that the added dangers in flight under such conditions would be partly compensated for by the slower speed in landing.

So this great American, who is with us to-day, climbed aboard the strange craft. He warmed up the motor. He released the wire that held the machine to the track from which it was to be launched. The machine moved forward into the wind. His brother, Wilbur Wright, ran at the side, holding a wing to help balance the airplane on the track. And then the machine left the ground. It answered to the controls. Man was flying!

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Twelve seconds later a landing was made 120 feet from the point at which the machine rose into the air. For thousands of years man had watched and envied the flying birds. At last he had conquered the secret. He too could fly.

Orville Wright has spoken of this flight as being "exceedingly erratic," which he attributed in part to the irregularity of the air and in part to lack of experience in handling the craft. The flight lasted only a few seconds, but it was the first in the history of the world in which a machine carrying a man had raised itself by its own power into the air in full flight, had sailed forward under this same power without reduction in speed, and had finally landed at a point as high as that from which it started.

Three more flights were undertaken immediately thereafter, with Wilbur and Orville Wright alternating as pilots. Each successive flight was an improvement upon its predecessor, and when the joy of these two men was at a height greater than either ever experienced before a strong gust of wind picked up this mechanical bird and played havoc with it. Although this came like a bolt of lightning out of a blue sky, Orville and Wilbur Wright had cast the die; they had solved the problem of human flight, even though the elements, always the aircraft's greatest enemy, scored a hit almost coincident with man's great victory.

In the quarter of a century which has elapsed since that memorable day the art has developed from two pilots and one plane to tens of thousands of airmen and aircraft flying all over the world. The science of aeronautics has gone forward until it has taken a vital and prominent place in the national defense and in the economic life of all peoples.

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Twenty-five years ago to-day an airplane established a distance record of 852 feet and a nonstop flight record of 59 seconds. This was on the fourth and last flight of the original Kitty Hawk machine and was made with Wilbur Wright at the controls.

To-day the records of the National Aeronautic Association show that airplanes have remained aloft for 65 hours and 25 minutes and have traveled 4,466 miles in flight without refueling, have flown to an altitude of 38,418 feet, have shot through the air at 318 miles per hour, and have lifted more than 6 tons of cargo nearly 7,000 feet. They have brought the people of New York and California to within 19 hours of each other. They have joined Europe and America in single nonstop flights. They have linked America and the Far East, they have circled the globe, they have flown over the top of the world, and they have started to shrink the earth until it is difficult to foresee just when and where this shrinkage will stop.

Our mail, express, and in many cases our people speed through the night along lighted highways of the air, outdistancing every other available means of transportation. What we have to-day is but an indication of what we shall have in the future. It would be unwise to indulge in predictions as to what we shall be doing with aircraft, or what aircraft will be doing for us, when the fiftieth anniversary of this great event in the history of our Nation and the world rolls around. The best course to pursue is to seek the truth and build on a foundation of thorough knowledge.

(Addressing Mr. Orville Wright:)

We have an obligation to you, Mr. Wright. Our obligation is to take what you gave us here 25 years ago and develop it to the maximum. We must use as far

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as we are able the intelligence, the foresight, the perseverance, the honesty, and the integrity, together with the modesty and unselfishness which have characterized your every action from the day when you and your brother first undertook the solution of the problem of human flight. Mr. Wright, you have endeared yourself to the heart of everyone who has had the good fortune to share your friendship and acquaintance. You have proved yourself worthy of all the honor that has been tendered you for your magnificent contribution to the progress of the world.

No honor is too great for this genius of the twentieth century.

Mr. Wright, we are grateful that you could journey back to the scenes of your first flights to honor by your presence your fellow members of the National Aeronautic Association in their humble efforts to preserve for posterity the exact location which marked man's first flight. At the same time we deeply mourn the absence of your devoted brother not only from this hallowed place on this occasion but from the world.

And now, on behalf of the membership of the National Aeronautic Association, I have the honor to unveil this granite boulder which, we hope, will long serve to mark the birthplace of human flight and to perpetuate the affectionate regard in which you are held by all those who are proud to be known as your fellow members.

CONCLUSION

(At this point Senator Bingham gave the signal, and cords held by Miss Mary Byrd Saunders and Miss Florence Ballard of Elizabeth City, N. C., were pulled which separated the silken folds of a parachute and unveiled

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the memorial boulder erected by the National Aeronautic Association, bearing a bronze tablet with the following inscription:)

THE FIRST SUCCESSFUL FLIGHT
OF AN AIRPLANE
was made from this spot by
ORVILLE WRIGHT
December 17, 1903, in a machine designed and built by
WILBUR WRIGHT AND ORVILLE WRIGHT

This tablet was erected by the
NATIONAL AERONAUTIC ASSOCIATION
of the U. S. A. December 17, 1928
to commemorate the twenty-fifth
anniversary of this event

At the unveiling of the memorial the band played The Star-Spangled Banner, and a number of carrier pigeons were released, which after circling overhead flew toward Norfolk.

The guest of honor, Mr. Orville Wright, and other delegates then posed beside the memorial for photographs, and the people came forward to view the memorial at close range.

This concluded the exercises of the day.

